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according to the invention, may be implemented in hardware in which steam tube or chamber 3 is distinct from compression unit 6, for example as shown in Figures 2 and 3. In the embodiment of Figure 1, a plug is formed immediately upstream of 11, before expansion at atmospheric pressure at 12. The plug in effect decouples the pre-treatment at elevated temperature and moisture in process 1, from the atmospheric pressure in storage bin 14. Alternatively, the conveyor 13, bin 14 and plug screw feeder 15 can be omitted, and a specially adapted Pressafiner screw device, such as described with respect to Figure 3 below, can be employed to introduce pre-treated material directly into the refiner pre-heating chamber 20. --

Page 12, line 29, delete "similarly", and substitute --Similarly--.

Page 14, line 30, delete "87" and substitute --88--.

Page 15, line 23, after "space" insert --115--.

Page 22, Table B, third column, delete "EXAMPLE 3" and substitute --COMPARATIVE EXAMPLE 3--; in the blank space in the second line of the second column, insert --Per Invention--; in the second line of column 3, delete "Comparative" and substitute --Per Invention--.

Page 22, line 27, delete "Example 1" and substitute --Example 2--.

Page 25, Table D, at the top of the first column delete "Comparative Example 6", and at the top of the second column insert --Comparative Example 6--.

In the Claims:

Cancel claims 4, 6, 8-14. Amend claims 1, 2, 3, 5, and add new claims 23-30 as follows: